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# Finding Your Genealogical Roots

## Research Centers in Springfield

**George H. Ryan**
**Secretary of State and State Archivist**

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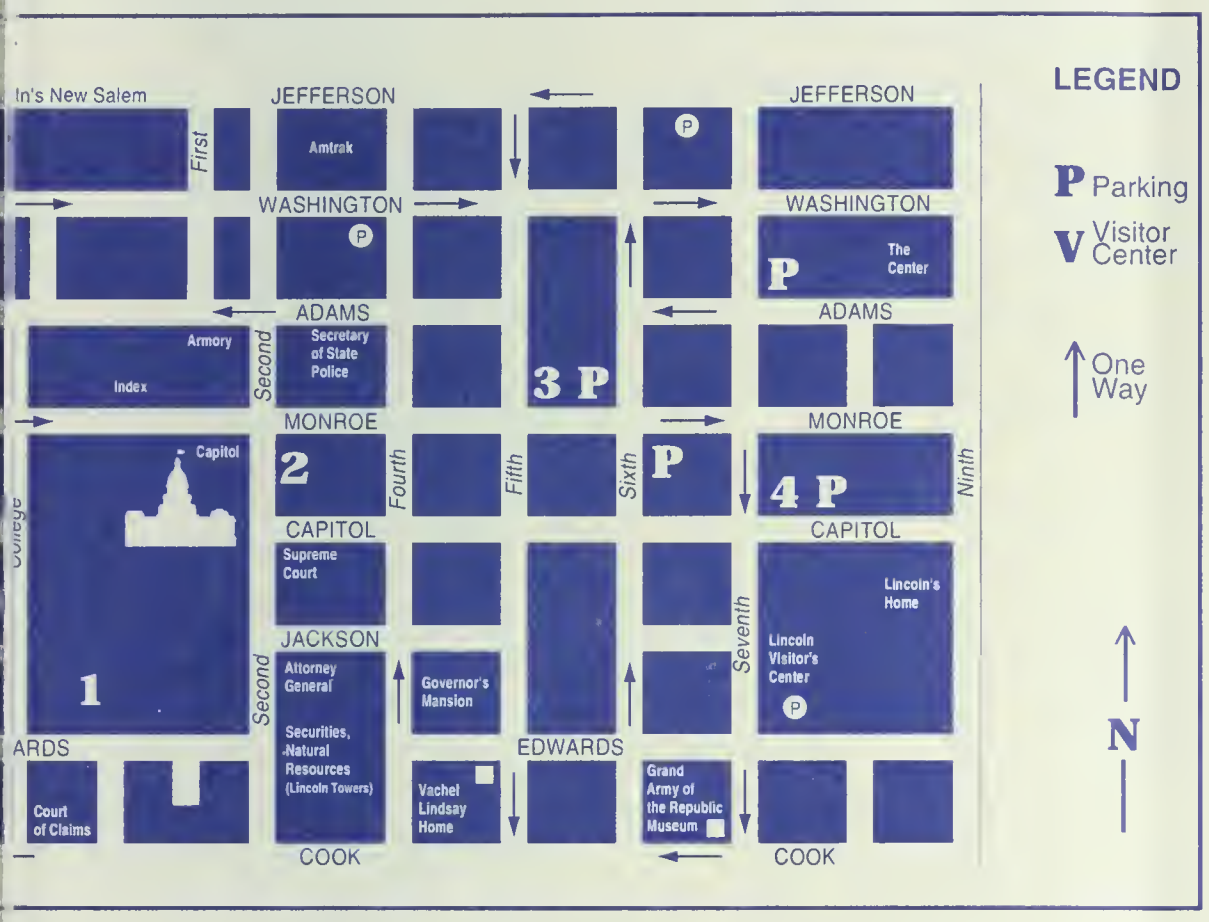
As the Capital of Illinois, Springfield is the home of a wide variety of genealogical collections. Illinois land offered as bounty for service in the War of 1812 stimulated early settlement. Farmers from overworked Eastern states migrated to the rich prairies of Illinois. Later immigrants from Europe reached Illinois through Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River. Following the Civil War, Illinois became the starting point for many in the westward migration.

Visitors to Springfield can find records left by their ancestors whether they settled in Illinois or used it as a jumping-off point to the West. Research facilities in Springfield help thousands of visitors each year in their quest for their heritage. Many visitors find that Abraham Lincoln's hometown was also home to their ancestors.

## 1 *Illinois State Archives*

*Margaret Cross Norton Building*
*Springfield, IL 62756*
*(217) 782-4682*
*Weekdays 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*
*Sat. 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.*
*(Except holiday weekends)*

The State Archives is the repository for state records of enduring value. Illinois' earliest land grants are recorded here. Muster rolls and military records in the collection include a large number of Civil War registers. All Illinois Federal and State Censuses are available. A surname card index exists for much of the collection. A goal of the staff is to encourage and assist the public in genealogical research.




## 2 Illinois State Library

*300 South Second Street*
*Springfield, IL 62701*
*(217) 782-7596*
*Weekdays 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

The State Library collects the official publications of state and federal government. It holds microform copies of many State Archives records, which may be used onsite or borrowed on interlibrary loan. Collections of genealogical interest include; manuscript Census reels for Illinois through 1920, 19th and 20th century Illinois county plat books, Illinois county histories, Sanborn atlases, and Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Warrants microfilm.

## 3 Illinois State Historical Library

*Old State Capitol*
*Springfield, IL 62701*
*(217) 524-6358*
*Weekdays 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

The Historical Library contains many published sources. These sources include an extensive collection of county histories with an everyname index. The Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution and the State Genealogical Society donate publications to the Historical Library. The Library has the largest microfilm collection of Illinois newspapers in the state, some dating prior to statehood. Many family papers are contained in the large manuscript collection.

## 4 Sangamon Valley Collection

*Lincoln Library*
*326 South Seventh Street*
*Springfield, IL 62701*
*(217) 753-4910*
*Hours: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.*
*9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fri.*
*9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sat.*

The primary purpose of the collection is to provide in-depth resources for the study of Sangamon and the surrounding counties. Obituaries in the *Illinois State Journal* are indexed for the years 1861-1934 and 1959 to the present. All Springfield City Directories are available.

## 5 Family History Center

*3601 Buckeye Drive*
*Springfield, IL 62707*
*(217) 529-7930*
*Call for hours.*

The Family History Center is a branch of the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Through this and other Centers like it, patrons have access to records from all over the world, acquired by the world's largest genealogical library. The Center's computer is available to search databases, such as the International Genealogical Index, Social Security Death Index, the Military Death Index from the Korean and Vietnam Wars, the Ancestral File and the catalog of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Items of regional interest are available in each Center's collection. A list of Center locations worldwide is available.

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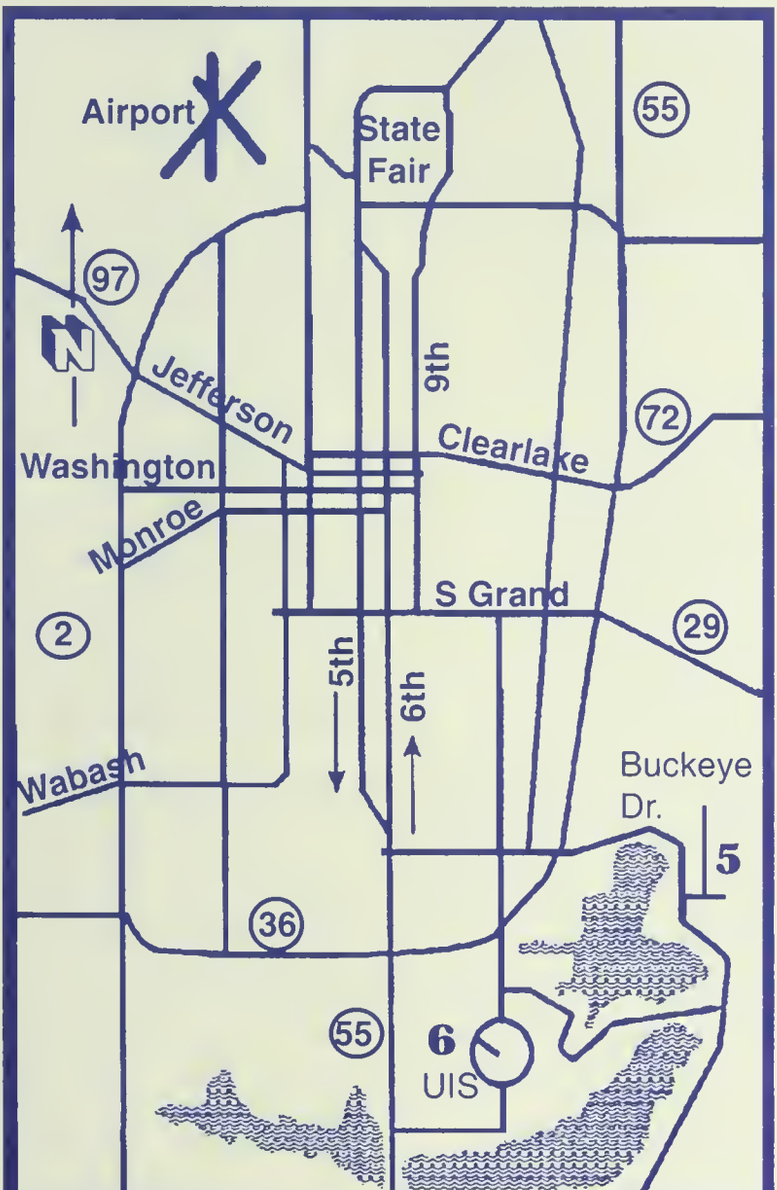
## 6 *Illinois Regional Archives — (IRAD)*

*Brookens Library*
*University of Illinois at Springfield*
*Springfield, IL 62794*
*(217) 786-6520*
*Weekday Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

The IRAD center is a repository for government documents generated at the local level. Records available at the UIS center are from Mason, Cass, Menard, Scott, Morgan, Sangamon, Macon, Christian, Green, Jersey, Macoupin, Montgomery, Fayette and Bond counties. Types of records available may include birth, death, divorce, probate, naturalization and many others. A list of record types available by county may be obtained from: Information Services/IRAD, IL State Archives, Springfield, 62756. Requests should be limited to five counties. Seven Regional Depositories have been established statewide.



# Hints for Success in Genealogical Research

- Before visiting, contact the library and request further information about its genealogical materials.
- Have a basic familiarity with different types of records, their organization and content.
- Know the basics of genealogical research. Read a couple of "How-to" books before beginning research.
- Obey all of the rules of the research facility.
- Bring change for the photocopier.
- Carefully and completely copy call numbers and other bibliographic data when requesting materials, making copies, and writing your notes.
- Treat books, and other resource materials with care.
- Courteously ask a library staff member for assistance.

Illinois State Archives
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